THE MOON TRAIL.

The moon trail shineth across the sea,
And stretcheth off to a far countree
In the realms of the old, romantic moon,
Where evening is morning, and midnight noon!
Then lovers away on the bright moon trail,
Each happy two with a tiny sail,
In a silver waste with stars above,
And nothing to do but love and love.

The great, kind moon, like a sphere of light,
Swings down to the rim of the sea each night,
Finding ever some bark with a happy crew,
Bringing all the world though it brings but two.
Then lovers away on the bright moon trail;
Soft breezes are sighing to fill your sail;
There are stars beneath and stars above,
And nothing to do but love and love.

The moon trail lighteth the sea of life
For lover and maiden, lover and wife,
And it's joy to sail down its shimmery way,
Just two together, forever and aye.
Then lovers away on the bright moon trail;
Each happy twain with a tiny sail,
For there's naught so sweet in Heaven above
Or the earth beneath, as to love and love.
—N. Y. Tribune.

THE MISTRESS of the Mine.

or A Woman Intervenes.

By Robert Barr.

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CHAPTER XIX.—CONTINUED.

A glimmer of a smile hovered about the red lips of a girl, a smile hardly perceptible, but giving an effect to her clear complexion, as if a sunbeam had crept into the room and its reflection had lit up her face.

"I have come to apologize, Mr. Wentworth," she said at last. "I find it a very difficult thing to do, and, as I don't know just how to begin, I'll plunge right into it."

"You don't need to apologize to me for anything, Miss Brewster," replied Wentworth rather stiffly.

"Oh, yes, I do. Don't make it harder than it is by being too frigidly polite about it, but say you accept the apology, and that you're sorry—no—I don't mean that—I should say that you're sure I'm sorry, and that you know I won't do it again."

Wentworth laughed, and Miss Brewster joined him.

"There," she said, "that's ever so much better. I suppose you've been thinking hard things of me ever since we last met."

"I've tried to," replied Wentworth.

"Now that's what I call honest; besides I like the implied compliment. I think it's very neat, indeed. I'm really very, very sorry that I—that things happened as they did. I wouldn't have blamed you if you had used exceedingly strong language about it at the time."

"I must confess that I did."

"Ah," said Jennie, with a sigh, "you men have so many comforts denied to us women. But I came here for another purpose; if I had merely wanted to apologize I think I would have written. I want some information which you can give me, if you like."

The young woman rested her elbows on the table, with her chin in her hands, gazing across at him earnestly and innocently. Poor George felt that it would be impossible to refuse anything of those large beseeching eyes.

"I want you to tell me about your mine."

All the geniality that had gradually come into Wentworth's face and manner vanished instantly.

"So this is the old business over again," he said.

"How can you say that!" cried Jennie, reproachfully. "I am asking for my own satisfaction entirely, and not for my paper. Besides, I tell you frankly what I want to know, and don't try to get it by indirect means—by false pretenses—as you once said."

"How can you expect me to give you information that does not belong to me alone? I have no right to speak of a business which concerns others without their permission."

"Ah, then there are at least two others concerned in the mine," said Jennie, gleefully. "Kenyon is one, I know, who is the other?"

"Miss Brewster, I will tell you nothing."

"But you have told me something already. Please go on and talk, Mr. Wentworth—about anything you like—and I shall soon find out all I want to know about the mine."

She paused, but Wentworth remained silent, which, indeed, the bewildered young man realized was the only safe thing to do.

"They speak of the talkativeness of women," Miss Brewster went on, as if soliloquizing, "but it is nothing to that of the men. Once set a man talking and you learn everything he knows—besides ever so much more that he doesn't."

Miss Brewster had abandoned her very talkative attitude, with its suggestion of confidential relations, and had removed her elbows from the table, sitting now back in her chair gazing dreamily at the dingy window which let the light in from the dingy court. She seemed to have forgotten that Wentworth was there, and said more to herself than to him:

"I wonder if Kenyon would tell me about the mine?"

"You might ask him."

"No, it wouldn't do any good," she continued, gently shaking her head. "He's one of your silent men, and there are so few of them in this world! Perhaps I had better go to William Longworth himself; he is not suspicious of me."

And as she said this she threw a quick glance at Wentworth, and the unfortunate young man's face at once told her that she had hit the mark. She bent her brow over the table and laughed with such evident enjoyment that Wentworth, in spite of his helpless anger, smiled grimly.

Jennie raised her head, but the sight of his perplexed countenance was too much for her, and it was some time before her merriment allowed her to speak. At last she said:

"Wouldn't you like to take me by the shoulders and put me out of the room, Mr. Wentworth?"

"I'd like to take you by the shoulders and shake you."

"Ah! that would be taking a liberty, and could not be permitted. We must leave punishment to the law, you know, although I do think a man should be allowed to turn an objectionable visitor into the street."

"Miss Brewster," cried the young man, earnestly, leaning over the table toward her, "why don't you abandon your horrible inquisitorial profession and put your undoubted talents to some other use?"

"What, for instance?"

"Oh—anything."

Jennie rested her fair cheek against her open palm again and looked at the dingy window. There was a long silence between them. Wentworth was absorbed in watching her clear-cut profile and her white throat, his breath quickening as he feasted his eyes on her beauty.

"I have always got angry," she said, at last, in a low voice, with the quiver of a suppressed sigh in it, "when other people have said that to me—I wonder why it is I merely feel hurt and sad when you say it? It is so easy to say, 'oh—anything'—so easy—so easy. You are a man, with the strength and determination of a man, yet you have met with disappointments and obstacles that have required all your courage to overcome. Every man has, and with most men it is a fight until the head is gray and the brain weary with the ceaseless struggle. The world is utterly merciless; it will trample you down relentlessly if it can, and if your vigilance relaxes for a moment it will steal your crust and leave you to starve. When I think of this incessant, sullen contest, with no quarter given or taken, I shudder and pray that I may die before I am at the mercy of the pitiless world. When I came to London I saw for the first time in my life that hopeless melancholy promenade of the sandwich men, human wreckage drifting along the edge of the street, as if they had been cast up there by the rushing tide sweeping past them.

"I want you to tell me something about your mine."

They—they seemed to me like a tottering procession of the dead—and on their backs was the announcement of a play that was making all London roar with laughter—the awful comedy and tragedy of it! Well, I simply couldn't stand it! I had to run up a side street and cry like the little fool I was, right in broad daylight."

Jennie paused and tried to laugh, but the effort ended in a sound suspiciously like a sob, and she dashed her hand, with quick impatience, across her eyes, from which Wentworth had never taken his own, watching them dim as the light from the window proved too strong for them, and finally fill as she ceased to speak. Searching ineffectually about her dress for a handkerchief, which lay on the table beside her parasol, unnoticed by either, Jennie went on, with some difficulty:

"Well, these poor, forlorn creatures were once men—men who had gone down, and if the world is so hard on a man, with all his strength and resourcefulness, think—think what it is for a woman to be thrown into this inhuman human turmoil—a woman without friends — without money—flung among these relentless wolves—to live if she can—or—to die—if she can."

The girl's voice broke and she buried her face in her arms, which rested on the table.

Wentworth sprang to his feet and came round to where she sat.

"Jennie," he said, putting his hand on her shoulder.

The girl, without looking up, shook off the hand that touched her.

"Go back to your place!" she cried, in a smothered voice. "Leave me alone!"

"Jennie," persisted Wentworth.

The young woman rose from her chair and faced him, stepping back a pace.

"Don't you hear what I say? Go back and sit down. I came here to talk business; not to make a fool of myself. It's all your fault, and I hate you for it—you and your silly questions."

But the young man stood where he was, in spite of the dangerous sparkle that lit up his visitor's wet eyes. A frown gathered on his brow.

"Jennie," he said, slowly, "are you playing with me again?"

The swift anger that blazed up in her face, reddening her cheeks, dried the tears.

"How dare you say such a thing to me?" she cried, hotly. "Do you flatter yourself that because I came here to talk business, I have also some personal interest in you? Surely even your self-conceit doesn't run so far as that!"

Wentworth stood silent, and Miss Brewster picked up her parasol, scattering, in her haste, the other articles on the floor. If she expected Wentworth to put them on the table again she was disappointed, for, although his eyes were upon her, his thoughts were far away upon the Atlantic ocean.

"I shall not stay here to be insulted," she cried, resentfully, bringing Wentworth's thoughts back with a rush to London again. "It is intolerable that you should use such an expression to me. Playing with you, indeed!"

"I had no intention of insulting you, Miss Brewster."

"What is it but an insult to use such a phrase? It implies that I either care for you or—"

"And do you?"

"Do I what?"

"Do you care for me?"

Jennie shook out the lace fringes of her parasol and smoothed them with some precision. Her eyes were bent on what she was doing, and consequently they did not meet those of her questioner.

"I care for you as a friend, of course," she said, at last, still giving much attention to the parasol. "If I had not looked on you as a friend I would not have come here to consult with you, would I?"

"No, I suppose not. Well, I am sorry I used the words that displeased you, and now, if you will permit it, we will go on with the consultation."

"It wasn't a pretty thing to say."

"I'm afraid I'm not good at saying pretty things."

"You used to be." The parasol being arranged to her liking she glanced up at him. "Still you said you were sorry, and that's all a man can say—or a woman either, for that's what I said myself when I came in. Now, if you will pick up those things from the floor—thanks—we will talk about the mine."

Wentworth seated himself in his chair again and said:

"Well, what is it you wish to know about the mine?"

"Nothing at all."

"But you said you wanted information."

"What a funny reason to give! And how a man misses all the fine points of a conversation! No; just because I asked for information, you might have known that it was what I really wanted."

"I'm afraid I'm very stupid. I hate to ask boldly what you did want, but I would like to know."

"I want a vote of confidence. I told you I was sorry because of a certain episode. I wanted to see if you trusted me, and I found you didn't. There."

"I think that was hardly a fair test. You see the facts did not belong to me alone."

Miss Brewster sighed, and slowly shook her head.

"That wouldn't have made the least difference if you had really trusted me."

"Oh, I say! You couldn't expect a man to—"

"Yes, I could."

"What, merely a friend?"

Miss Brewster nodded.

"Well, all I can say," remarked Wentworth, with a laugh, "is that friendship has made greater strides in the states than it has in this country."

Before Jennie could reply the useful boy knocked at the door and brought in a tea tray, which he placed before his master, then silently departed, closing the door noiselessly.

"May I offer you a cup of tea?"

"Please. What a curious custom this drinking of tea is in business offices. I think I shall write an article on 'A Nation of Tea Tipplers.' If I were an enemy to England, instead of being its greatest friend, I would descend with my army on this country between the hours of four and five in the afternoon, and so take the population unawares while it was drinking tea. What would you do if the enemy came down on you during such a sacred national ceremony?"

"I would offer her a cup of tea," replied Wentworth, suiting the action to the phrase.

"Mr. Wentworth," said the girl, archly, "you're improving. That remark was distinctly good. Still, you must remember that I come as a friend, not as an enemy. Did you ever read the 'Babes in the Wood?' It is a most instructive but pathetic work of fiction. You remember the wicked uncle, surely. Well, you and Mr. Kenyon remind me of the babes, poor, innocent, little things, and London—this part of it—is the dark and pathless forest. I am the bird hovering about you, waiting to cover you with leaves. The leaves, to do any good, ought to be checks fluttering down on you, but, alas! I haven't any. If negotiable checks only grew on trees, life would not be so difficult."

Miss Brewster sipped her tea pensively, and Wentworth listened to the musical murmur of her voice, which had such an entrancing effect on him, that he paid less heed to what she said than a man should when a lady is speaking. The tea drinking had added a touch of domesticity to the tete-a-tete that rather went to the head of the young man. He clinched and unclinched his hand out of sight under the table and felt the moisture on his palm. He hoped he would be able to retain control over himself, but the difficulty of his task almost overcome him when she now and then appealed to him with glance or gesture, and he felt as if he must cry out: "My girl, my girl, don't do that, if you expect me to stay where I am."

"I see you are not paying the slightest attention to what I am saying," she said, pushing the cup from her. She rested her arms on the table, leaning slightly forward, and turning her face full upon him. "I can tell by your eyes that you are thinking of something else."

"I assure you," said George, drawing a deep breath, "I am listening with intense interest."

"Well, that's right, for what I am going to say is important. Now, to wake you up, I will first tell you all about your mine, so that you will understand I did not need to ask anyone for information regarding it."

Here, to Wentworth's astonishment, she gave a rapid and accurate sketch of the negotiations and arrangements between the three partners and the present position of affairs.

"How do you know all this?" he asked.

"Never mind that, and you mustn't ask how I know what I am now going to tell you, but you must believe it implicitly and act upon it promptly. Longworth is fooling both you and Kenyon. He is making time, so that your option will run out; then he will pay cash for the mine at the original price, and you and Kenyon will be left to pay two-thirds of the debt incurred. Where is Kenyon?"

"He has gone to America."

"That's good. Cable him to get the option renewed. You can then try to form the company yourselves in London. If he can't obtain a renewal, you have very little time to get the cash together, and if you are not able to do that then you lose everything. This is what I came to tell you, although I have been a long time about it. Now I must go."

She rose, gathered her belongings from the table, and stood with the parasol pressed against her. Wentworth came around to where she was standing, his face paler than usual, probably because of the news he had heard. One hand was grasped tightly around one wrist in front of him. He felt that he should thank her for what she had done, but his lips were dry and somehow the proper words were not at his command.

She, holding her fragile lace-fringed parasol against her with one arm, was adjusting her long neatly-fitting glove, which she had removed before tea. A button, one of many, was difficult to fasten, and as she endeavored to put it in its place her sleeve fell away, showing a round white arm above the glove.

"You see," she said, a little breathlessly, her eyes upon her glove, "it is a very serious situation, and time is of great importance."

"I realize that."

"It would be such a pity to lose everything now, when you have had so much trouble and worry."

"It would."

"And I think that whatever is done should be done quickly. You should act at once and with energy."

"I am convinced that is so."

"Of course it is. You are of too trusting a nature; you should be more suspicious, then you wouldn't be tricked as you have been."

"No. The trouble is I have been too suspicious, but that is past. I won't be again."

"What are you talking about?" she said, looking quickly up at him. "Don't you know you'll lose the mine if—"

"Hang the mine!" he cried, flinging his wrist free and clasping her to him before she could step back or move from her place. "There is something more important than mines or money."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

What Marco Polo Did.

He was the first traveler to trace a route across the whole length of Asia, says one of his biographers, "describing kingdom after kingdom that he had seen with his own eyes." He was the first traveler to explore the deserts and the flowering plains of Persia, to reveal China with its mighty rivers, its swarming population, and its huge cities and rich manufactures; the first to visit and bring back accounts of Thibet, Laos, Burmah, Siam, Cochin China, Japan, the Indian Archipelago, Ceylon, Farther India, and the Andaman Islands; the first to give any distinct account of the secluded Christian empire of Abyssinia; the first to speak even vaguely of Zanzibar, Madagascar, and other regions in the mysterious south, and of Siberia and the Arctic ocean in the terrible and much dreaded north. Although centuries have passed since young Marco Polo grew to man's estate while treading his dangerous way among these distant lands, we must still look back to his discoveries for much that we know about these countries; for we have learned nothing new of many of them since his time.—Noah Brooks, in St. Nicholas.

Ingenious French Beggar.

An ingenious French beggar named Dumas, having ridden out of sight his arms and legs, and having provided himself with a letter from the mayor of his arrondissement recommending him as a worthy object of charity, enjoyed himself thoroughly among the charitable persons of Paris. Bread cakes, groceries, meat and money were showered on him, and he fared sumptuously. But a certain grocer in the Rue de Montreuli, finding Dumas was becoming something of a nuisance gave him in charge one day, and he was brought before the judge. He resisted violently the usual attempt to search him, and not without reason, for on the search being made there was found on him nothing very nefarious, but merely the ordinary complement of legs and arms in proper working order. To send a man to prison for having two legs seemed unreasonable, but it had to be done.—Chicago Inter Ocean.

Mozart, the Prodigy.

In one of the peaceful arts, we have the astonishing example of the Austrian musician and composer, Mozart. This lad was what we call a prodigy. He was the son of the bandmaster to the archbishop of the city of Salzburg. At four years of age—and you will admit that is truly young—he played the violin with the greatest ease, with an expression really wonderful. He also composed those old-fashioned dances, so quaint and sweet, called minuets, besides other simple pieces. At seven he made a tour of Europe, giving concerts, playing before kings and queens, and surprising the whole musical world. Then, when he was about 12, he began to write operas, and so original and delightful were these that he may be said to have founded a school or manner of writing musical compositions of a dramatic nature. After having done the work of two lifetimes, he died at the early age of 39.—Arthur Hoeber, in St. Nicholas.